

**SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN
(PUBLIC PARTICIPATION)**

February 19, 2002

7:00 PM

Mayor Baines called the meeting to order.

Mayor Baines called for the Pledge of Allegiance, this function being led by Alderman Sysyn.

A moment of silent prayer was observed.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Wihby, Gatsas, Guinta, Sysyn, Osborne, Pinard,
Shea, DeVries, Garrity, Smith, Thibault, Forest, O'Neil, and Lopez

Mayor Baines advised that the purpose of the special meeting is to give residents of Manchester the opportunity to address the Board on items of concern affecting the community; that each person will be given only one opportunity to speak; that comments shall be limited to two minutes to allow all participants the opportunity to speak and any comments must be directed to the Chair.

Mayor Baines requested that any resident wishing to speak come forward to the nearest microphone, clearly state their name and address when recognized, and give their comments.

Rita O'Connor, 23 Country Club Drive, Manchester stated:

The seniors are definitely against the reconstruction of the health, youth and elderly services department into a department of Public Health and Community Service because the elderly service department will lose its identity, mission and also lose the law that commits the City to provide services to the seniors. Alderman Lopez spoke to me and other seniors last summer. He told us that he was against this consolidation. It is not any different now. We are proud to be seniors of Manchester and if you look behind me you will not only see parents, grandparents, great grandparents and seniors but you will see volunteers, caregivers, etc. We all have something in common the same as you. Please, it doesn't hurt to be a child. Should it hurt to be a senior? If we are a number one City why can't we be a number one senior center? As you know, I am a nervous wreck and I

am not good for talking but I am fighting for something that I truly believe in, which is for us to stay by ourselves.

Brian Fortin, Modern Bride & Formal Shop, 1000 Elm Street, Manchester stated:

I am here to talk regarding a motion you may have in front of you tonight to rescind parking on Saturdays. I participated most of last year on a committee related to the parking issues downtown. First I want to address...there seems to be a little bit of confusion about the recollection of the merchants' desire for meters on Saturdays. I did participate in a number of those meetings and I did go through my notes last week and I do not recall through any of the discussions that we had last year that the merchants actually desired or wanted meters on Saturdays. By the time we became involved in the communications and talks, meters was pretty much a fact on Saturdays and our discussions were relative to managing the hours of the meters from four hours to two hours and there was a variety of preferences as far as managing the meters. Again, I really don't think at the time that we desired to have meters on Saturdays. It was part of a revenue issue for the City and we learned to deal with that. All said and done, I held a meeting today at

3 PM at the Palace Theatre at which we had 24+ downtown businesses attend and all had left the meeting expressing a desire to rescind meters on Saturday. Some had stated that their businesses were being hurt by a large percentage. One local business is talking about closing up after lunch and it was a restaurant that had been open in the evening. I just ask that you vote to rescind the meters tonight on behalf of all of the downtown businesses.

Marsha DuMont, 100 Hanover Street, Manchester stated:

I would also like to address the rescinding Saturday parking. I am not going to speak long or eloquently nor do I intend to list the reasons why I want you to rescind it. I know that you have all heard many, many arguments for and against. However, I will ask you tonight as our governing elected body to vote to rescind Saturday parking because the majority wants it.

John O'Keefe, 1097 Elm Street, Manchester stated:

I own and operate McGarvey's at 1097 Elm Street. I am involved in OK Parkers on Hanover Street and I am the landlord for the Stage Door Café on Hanover Street. I have been in the restaurant/pub business in Manchester for 32 years. I have held 29 different liquor licenses in the State. I have been through obviously all of the good and bad in Manchester and I can remember at Poor John's watching every Thursday night 15 to 20 what we used to call apprentice cops going to Elm Street because there were so many people downtown. We know that went away. It has been a tough road in Manchester and in the last few years and I give a lot of credit to you, Mayor, things have turned around and Elm Street is beginning to look like a downtown again. I am adamantly against the Saturday parking. As I said, I have seen the good and the bad and what I see

coming from this is all negative. I have talked to most of the merchants in the area and I don't know anybody in favor of it. Personally, on Saturdays my business at McGarvey's is off 50%. Over the years I have developed a clientele that will stop in usually after work and I have lost most of them. For \$10 tickets, you are not going to get too many people coming in. What is happening is they are going out of town to Chantilly's or whatever. I can't compete. I am adamantly against the Saturday parking and I beg you...I mean there is penny wise and pound foolish and I think we are a little out of hand now. We are becoming a very unfriendly City.

Moe L'Heureux, 83 Hanover Street, Manchester stated:

The original intention of the civic center was to promote downtown. What we are saying to the customers and patrons of the civic center is welcome to downtown but please mail your \$10. The impact to the parking regarding the civic center has been very minimum. Typically at 5 PM most of the workers and employees leave downtown and the civic center opens up at 7 PM so there is really not a parking issue. All of these items that we created in order to resolve the parking issue that really never happened never came to fruition. What has taken place is we have events maybe two or three nights a week and the retailers and patrons are punished six and seven days a week with these new regulations. The other thing that has come up is tickets were encouraged to have customers rotate through the meters. They didn't want employees to stay there for eight hours. They wanted a two hour maximum so they would be rotated through. Now it seems that we are using these meters to generate cash and that was not the intention of those meters.

There being no one else present wishing to speak, on motion of Alderman Pinard, duly seconded by Alderman Lopez, it was voted to take all comments under advisement and further to receive and file any written documentation presented.

This being a special meeting of the Board, no further business was presented, and on motion of Alderman Garrity, duly seconded by Alderman Shea, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk